

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 12-15, 18, and 19 are pending in the application. Claims 1-5, 8, 12-15, 18, and 19 have been amended hereby. Claims 6, 9-11, 16, and 17 have been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1, 13, and 18 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claim 16 has been cancelled, thereby rendering the rejection thereof moot.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of Claims 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §101, as being directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Claims 18 and 19 have been amended to recite a “computer-readable recording medium having stored therein a program which when executed cause a computer . . .” as suggested in the Office Action in paragraph 4.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended Claims 18 and 19 are directed to statutory subject matter, and meet all requirements of 35 U.S.C. §101.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of Claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

Claim 4 has been amended to clarify its recitation by deleting the phrase “at a time.”

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended Claim 4 is clear and definite in its recitation of the present invention, and meet all requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 12-15, 18, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0212619 (“Saito”).

Independent Claims 1, 13, and 18 have been amended to recite features shown, for example, in Figs. 3C and 10-13 of the present application, in particular, the following two features:

Feature 1:

A target stamp is filled with divided subareas (quads) in a predetermined sequence without creating any gap, so as to generate a merged area (merged stamp shown in Fig. 3C and at the bottom of Fig. 13). In this process, the position of the subarea (quad) is permitted to be changed from the original position.

Feature 2:

The area writer writes the subareas (quads) included in the merged area (merged stamp) into a memory, relocating each subarea in its original position.

For the purpose of relocating the subarea in the merged area in its original position, “positional information indicating the relative position of each subarea within the unit area to which the subarea belonged before the division” is used.

The presently claimed invention allows three or more stamps to be merged, as shown in Fig. 10, for example.

In contrast, according to Saito, the relative positions of the subareas remain merged unchanged before and after the merge. Since the relative positions remain unchanged, there is no need to generate positional information.

It should also be noted that Saito at best teaches merging a maximum of two stamps.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent Claims 1, 13, and 18, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentably distinct over Saito.

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth above, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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